

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 9, 13, 14, and 16, remain withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected invention. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Specification

The Examiner objected to the disclosure as including informalities, as at page 34, 3rd paragraph. Accordingly, Applicant has amended the specification to remove the noted informality.

Drawings

Two sheets of corrected drawings have been filed herewith, wherein the changes to Figs. 5 and 8 were approved in the April 3 Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 8, 11, 15, and 17 under §102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent 6,038,205 to Katakura et al. (hereinafter Katakura). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because Katakura fails to disclose every element as set forth and arranged in Applicant's claims.

Claims 1 and 11 each set forth a sealing member having a second portion being bonded and fixed to an axial direction extreme endmost surface of one of an inner and outer ring of a bearing. Claim 15 sets forth a sheet covering a gap between an inner ring and an outer ring and disposed externally on an extreme endmost side ... in the axial direction of the bearing device.

The term "endmost" is defined as situated at the very end", whereas "end" is defined as the "extreme or last part lengthwise: TIP", and "extreme" is defined as "situated at the farthest possible point from a center; MAXIMUM". See Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1986). Accordingly, "extreme" explicitly defines what was inherent previously; i.e., that the sealing member—as in claims 1 and 11, or the sheet as set forth in claim 15—is at the farthest possible point in the axial direction from a center of the bearing ring. In contrast, Katakura

discloses a sealing member 11 that is recessed below the farthest possible point on the bearing ring. That is, sealing member 11 is on a lower step portion that is formed in the end of the bearing ring.

For at least any of the above reasons, claims 1, 11, and 15 are not anticipated by Katakura. Likewise, dependent claims 8 and 17 are not anticipated by this reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 2-4, 10, and 12, under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Katakura in view of US Patent 5,270,887 to Edwards et al. (hereinafter Edwards). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because the references fail to teach or suggest all the elements as set forth in Applicant's claims.

The Examiner asserts that Katakura discloses a sealing member but fails to disclose a specific composition of the sealing layer. As noted above, Katakura also fails to teach or suggest that the sealing layer is located on an extreme endmost surface of one of an inner and outer ring. The Examiner cited Edwards as teaching a specific sealing layer structure. But Edwards does not teach or suggest that the sealing layer is located on an extreme endmost surface of one of an inner and outer ring. Accordingly, even assuming that one of ordinary skill in the art were motivated to combine the references as suggested by the Examiner, any such combination would still not teach or suggest that a sealing layer is located on an extreme endmost surface of one of an inner and outer ring.

For at least any of the above reasons, claims 2-4, 10, and 12, are not rendered obvious by Katakura in view of Edwards.

Allowable Subject Matter

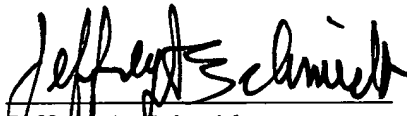
Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 5-7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have not rewritten these dependent claims in independent form because of the belief that the independent claims are allowable as written.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeffrey A. Schmidt
Registration No. 41,574

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE



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